

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the Interview held on August 28, 2008 and for indicating that the proposed amendments would overcome the art of record.

Claims 1-25 are pending. By this amendment, claims 1, 15, 19, 20, and 24 are amended and new claim 26 is added. Support for the amendments and new claim can be found at least in paragraphs [3], [5], and [14] of the specification. No new matter is introduced. Reconsideration and issuance of a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

On page 2 the Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 6-14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,965,076 to Wu (hereafter Wu). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Wu is directed to a modular computer keyboard assembly that separates keyboard components into two groups. However, as acknowledged on page 8 of the Office Action, Wu does not disclose or suggest a second cavity, in addition to a first cavity in which a circuit is disposed, located in a lower enclosure for stiffening the lower enclosure and for providing a passage for one or more cables that couple the keyboard to a processor. Furthermore, Wu does not disclose or suggest a node support located in the second cavity that provides physical support for a bottom node of the circuit to ensure contact between the bottom node and a top node is maintained when the circuit generates a signal. The Office Action asserts on page 3 that Wu's electrical circuitry membrane of Figure 2d is a node support. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The electrical circuitry membrane of Figure 2d of Wu "electronically determine[s] which of the keycap is being pressed down and send[s] that information to the computer for further processing." See Wu, column 3, lines 13-16. Electronically determining which keycap is being pressed is not providing physical support for a bottom node of the circuit to ensure contact between the bottom node and a top node is maintained when the circuit generates a signal.

To the contrary, claim 1 has been amended to more precisely recite the novel features of the present application and recites: "a region forming a second cavity in a lower enclosure for stiffening the lower enclosure and for providing a passage for one or more cables that couple the keyboard to a processor; and a node support located in the second cavity and operable to support the second node of the circuit to ensure contact between the first and second nodes is maintained when the circuit disposed in the first cavity generates the signal." As noted above and agreed upon during the August 28, 2008 Interview, Wu does not disclose or suggest these features. Therefore, amended claim 1 is patentable.

Claims 2-3 and 6-14 depend from patentable claim 1. For these reasons and the additional features they recite, claims 2-3 and 6-14 also are patentable.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3 and 6-14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

On page 6 the Office Action rejects claims 4-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wu in view of http://reviews.cnet.com/keyboards/apple-wireless-keyboard/4505-3134_-30568482.html?tag=prod.img.1 to Sheehan (hereafter Sheehan). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Sheehan is directed to Apple's wireless keyboard. However, Sheehan does not cure Wu's defect and does not disclose or suggest a second cavity, in addition to a first cavity in which a circuit is disposed, located in a lower enclosure for stiffening the lower enclosure and for providing a passage for one or more cables that couple the keyboard to a processor. Also, Sheehan does not disclose or suggest a node support located in the second cavity that provides physical support for a bottom node of the circuit to ensure contact between the bottom node and a top node is maintained when the circuit generates a signal. Therefore, amended claim 1 is patentable over Wu and Sheehan, as agreed upon during the August 28, 2008 Interview.

Claims 4-5 depend from patentable claim 1. For these reasons and the additional features they recite, claims 4-5 also are patentable.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 4-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

On page 8 the Office Action rejects claims 15-16 and 18-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wu in view of U.S. Patent 5,865,546 to Ganthier, et al. (hereafter Ganthier). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Ganthier is directed to a modular keyboard that allows input device modules to be inserted into the keyboard assembly. However, the connector 105 of Ganthier is not a second cavity, in addition to a first cavity in which a circuit is disposed, located in a lower enclosure for stiffening the lower enclosure and for providing a passage for one or more cables that couple the keyboard to a processor. Furthermore, contrary to the Office Action's assertion on page 8, the slot 107 of Ganthier merely allows the insertion of the blade from the male connector from the input device module into the female connector, which is not a node support that provides physical support for a bottom node of the circuit to ensure contact between the bottom node and a top node is maintained when the circuit generates a signal.

To the contrary, claim 15 has been amended to more precisely recite the novel features of the present application and recites: “a region forming a cavity for stiffening the lower enclosure and for providing a passage for one or more cables that couple the keyboard to a processor, and a node support located in the cavity and operable to provide physical support for one or more of the nodes of the switch membrane assembly to ensure contact between the first and second nodes is maintained when the circuit generates the signal.” As noted above, Wu and Ganthier, individually and in combination, do not disclose or suggest these features. Therefore, amended claim 15 is patentable over Wu and Ganthier, as agreed upon during the August 28, 2008 Interview.

Amended claims 19, 20, and 24 recite features similar to those of claim 15, and for this reason, claims 19, 20, and 24 also are patentable.

Claims 16 and 18 depend from patentable claim 15; claims 21-23 depend from patentable claim 20; and claim 25 depends from patentable claim 24. For these reasons and the additional features they recite, claims 16, 18, 21-23, and 25 also are patentable.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15-16 and 18-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

On page 12 the Office Action rejects claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wu in view of Ganthier and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,587,094 to Anderson (hereafter Anderson). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Anderson is directed to a two-sided input keyboard that has first and second keyboards mounted so that their respective keys face in substantially opposite directions. However, Anderson does not cure Wu and Ganthier’s defect and does not disclose or suggest a second cavity, in addition to a first cavity in which a circuit is disposed, located in a lower enclosure for stiffening the lower enclosure and for providing a passage for one or more cables that couple the keyboard to a processor. Also, Anderson does not disclose or suggest a node support located in the second cavity that provides physical support for a bottom node of the circuit to ensure contact between the bottom node and a top node is maintained when the circuit generates a signal. Therefore, amended claim 15 is patentable over Wu, Ganthier, and Anderson, as agreed upon during the August 28, 2008 Interview.

Claim 17 depends from patentable claim 15. For this reason and the additional features it recites, claim 17 also is patentable.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

New Claim

New claim 26 is allowable at least because it depends from patentable claim 1, and for the additional features it recites. For example, Wu, Sheehan, Ganthier, and Anderson, individually and in combination, do not disclose or suggest that "the node support eliminates a need for a metal plate to provide the keyboard a desired stiffness during use," as recited in claim 26.

Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Prompt examination and allowance are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desired in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: **September 11, 2008**


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